

# Farmington Observer

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**Pact made:** The city of Farmington Hills and its firefighters union have reached a three-year contract, avoiding arbitration. /A2

**New chapter:** Farmington Branch Community Library celebrates its refurbished digs Sunday. /A3

## OPINION

**Right thing:** The Harrison High School principal let democracy work by allowing students to protest over man sentenced to death. /A14

## COMMUNITY LIFE

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## SPORTS

**Grid previews:** The Farmington and Harrison high school football teams are preparing for big games this weekend as the prep playoffs enter the regional championship phase. /C1

**Playoff perspective:** Observer Sports Editor Dan O'Meara takes a look at various aspects of the Harrison and Farmington playoff experiences in his column. /C1

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# Smooth opening for Mayor Bates

BY RICHARD PEARL  
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Becoming Farmington Hills mayor is "truly humbling" and "an incredible honor," Nancy Bates said Monday night.



But there's some humor in it, too, noted the city's new top elected public official.

For one thing, said the mayor in her inaugural address, the five Bates children now are calling her "Mayor Mom" and her husband Charles, their father, "First Dude."

Speaking moments after being sworn in by City Clerk Kathy Dorman, the former mayor pro-tem and longtime city council member said she's also gotten "some very interesting questions."

"My children want to know if their Christmas presents will now reflect the increase in pay citizens have so generously voted for us," she said tongue-in-cheek, referring to the new \$7,500

■ Nancy Bates was sworn in as Farmington Hills' new mayor, and showed humor, as well as compassion for the Vagnozzi family.

annual mayoral salary.

Furthermore, "My nephew wants to know if he can now ride around in a police car" and "my neighbors are wondering if this means they will get plowed out sooner this winter."

"Sorry, everybody," she said firmly but politely. "The answer to all those questions is a big NO."

Bates, the first woman - and only the second person - in Hills city history to be elected mayor by popular vote, said she is looking forward to the increased responsibilities and "many challenges" facing the city, including traffic, rainwater drainage, power-grid service and development and redevelopment.

The city council charged with these

Please see BATES, A6



New era begins: Nancy Bates, surrounded by family and supporters, is sworn in as Farmington Hills mayor by Clerk Kathy Dorman. Bates succeeds Aldo Vagnozzi.

# Community loses two beloved members

## Lois Vagnozzi: A friend to many

## Alyce Faye raised awareness

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
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As the wife of Farmington Hills' most recognizable political figure, Lois Vagnozzi didn't retreat into the shadows.

She created her own spotlight through her wisdom, warmth and generosity, say those who knew her. Lois Margaret Vagnozzi died Monday at her home after a five-year battle with ovarian cancer. She was 71.

Aldo, her husband of 50 years, often sought his wife's counsel, especially as the city's first directly-elected mayor.

"There were a number of times when I would turn to her for advice because she would always come up with the right answers," Aldo said.

At Monday's Farmington Hills City Council meeting, there was a moment of silence in her memory.

Many former and current city employees and elected officials knew Lois and considered her a dear friend.



Lois Vagnozzi

"For many years, we thought Lois was just a wonderful person," said Bill Costick, Hills city manager from 1983 to 1996. "She was a great sup-

Please see LOIS VAGNOZZI, A7

BY MARY RODRIGUE  
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Beloved Farmington comedienne and fund-raiser extraordinaire Alyce Faye died Saturday in Providence Hospital. She was 61.

As co-founder of the Motor City Women of Comedy, she was instrumental in raising thousands of dollars for Gilda's Club, a non-profit organization that offers support to cancer patients and their families.

A funeral service is planned for 10 a.m. this morning at St. Aidan Catholic Church, 17500 Farmington Road in Livonia. For the past decade, Ms. Faye performed stand-up comedy in clubs throughout Michigan and the Midwest. She appeared on stage and television on CBS' 48 Hours and the Phil Donahue Show.

She was a founding member of Gilda's Club. With her partner, Mary Miller, Ms. Faye founded Motor City Women of Comedy as a tribute to their mentor, Gilda Radner, who died



Alyce Faye

of ovarian cancer in 1989. Gilda's Club is a network of homelike support networks across the country to

Please see FAYE, A4

## Play date at North



On top: North Farmington High School presents "You Can't Take It With You," a rollicking comedic love story about a 1930s family. In this scene Penelope Sycamore, played by Sara Armstrong, paints Mr. DePinna, played by Adam Hertz, as she's watched by her husband, Paul Sycamore, played by Matt Adler. Rheba, played by Kelly Karakashian, offers a critical eye. Performances are Friday and Saturday, Nov. 12-13. Both shows begin at 7:30 p.m. in the North Farmington auditorium. Tickets are \$ 5. Call 489-3535 for information.

# Founders Festival moves to late June

BY TIM SMITH  
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If you can't beat 'em, change the date.

Instead of the usual second week of July, the next Farmington Area Founders Festival will take place June 22-24, 2000, according to festival management and city officials.

The date change was approved at the most recent meeting of the Founders Festival board, said Farmington City Manager Frank Lauhoff. He called the change a positive one - even though Farmington's event will now directly compete with Livonia's Spree.

"Yeah, they're both the same week," said Lauhoff. "But the two events are so different. And this puts us ahead of the Fourth of July (holiday) and other festivals."

The Livonia Spree features more carnival fare than the Founders Festival, said Mike Watts of Watts-Up! Inc. Mike and Susan Watts are entering the second year of managing the festival.

"There are other major festivals in the month of July that we were competing with and there are only so many crafters and vendors," said Mike Watts.

He was referring to successful arts and crafts events held last July in Plymouth and Wyandotte. "... With this, we hope to draw from a bigger pool of people."

Please see FESTIVAL, A4

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